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ABSTRACT

In order to develop a marketing program for potential students and assist in institutional planning, a study was conducted at Walla Walla Community College (WWCC), Washington, to obtain information from high school seniors regarding their career interests, educational plans, and perceptions of WWCC's programs and services. Questionnaires were administered at 13 local public and private high schools, and responses were obtained from 677 seniors, representing 67% of all seniors enrolled at these institutions. Selected findings included the following: (1) 83% of the students said they planned to continue their education at some time after high school; (2) of the students anticipating further studies, 67% planned to attend a two-year college and 33% planned to attend a four-year institution; (3) 63% cited money as the most likely obstacle to furthering their education; (4) 39% said they were very sure of their career choice, while 15% reported being not at all sure; (5) the most popular career choice among students (36%) was the area of business and commerce; (6) 70% reported some familiarity with WWCC's intercollegiate athletics, financial aid, and basic skills curriculum; (7) 40% of the respondents wanted more information about WWCC, and of these, only about half planned to attend the school; and (8) 75% rated WWCC's academic quality as good or excellent. The study report discusses the implications of the findings for curriculum and program development and includes the questionnaire. (DAB)

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HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS' CAREER INTERESTS, EDUCATIONAL PLANS, AND PERCEPTIONS OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES AVAILABLE AT WALLA WALLA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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INTRODUCTION

Walla Walla Community College, like most other institutions of higher education, is finding the 1980's to be a decade of unprecedented change. Changes in student needs and interests are creating new challenges. The problems of declining resources and inflation are converging with enrollment shifts to create significant managerial problems and opportunities. In this environment, priorities must be established and resources reallocated if the college is to remain responsive to student and community needs.

To remain responsive, the college must have up-to-date information. This information will serve as a basis for making the tough decisions regarding which programs and courses will be added, expanded, reduced in scope, or eliminated.

One important source of students for the college is the graduating high school senior. A significant change in the number of graduating seniors attending WWCC would have a substantial impact on college enrollment patterns. If the participation rate of these potential students is not increased and enrollment patterns parallel the decline in the number of seniors, resources will be reallocated to serve other student markets. A significant decline in enrollment of graduating seniors potentially could jeopardize the comprehensiveness of the college, since the majority of these students take academic courses.

On the other hand, more seniors may stay at home and attend their local community college because of financial consideration. Moreover, the State may consider policy which would restrict entry to the 4-year colleges and universities. This would leave the community college as the only option for a majority of seniors.

It becomes very important for WWCC to have the best information obtainable for planning purposes.

PURPOSE OF STUDY

The purpose of this study was to obtain information from high school seniors concerning their career interests, educational plans, and perceptions of programs and services available at Walla Walla Community College. The information will be used in institutional planning and as a basis for developing a marketing program designed to inform potential students of educational opportunities at WWCC. More specifically, this study was designed to answer the following questions:

1. What are the high school seniors' plans after graduation?
2. What college or school do the seniors that plan to continue their education desire to attend?
3. What are the most important reasons for choosing a particular college or school.
4. What are the high school seniors' career choices?
5. What factors may prevent students from furthering their education?
6. What is the high school senior's impression about the academic quality of WWCC?
7. How does WWCC compare with 4-year colleges?
8. What are the students' primary sources of information about the college?

9. How familiar are high school seniors with programs and services provided by the college?
10. Do high school seniors want additional information about the college?

METHODOLOGY

The college first surveyed high school seniors in Community College District #20 in 1980. Responses were received from 520 seniors attending the eight participating districts. This initial survey effort provided the opportunity to develop and pilot test the instrument and establish a procedure for analyzing data.

In January of 1982, the College received a grant through the Research Coordinating Unit of the Washington State Commission for Vocational Education which provided an opportunity to strengthen and replicate the study. A specific breakdown of the research methodology is included in the Appendix (see Attachment 1). The initial step was to finalize and pilot test the survey questionnaire (see Attachment 2). Data was key punched from the questionnaires and transmitted to The Ohio State University for analysis and interpretation by a technical specialist in research methodology.

Participation

Responses were received from 677 seniors attending the 13 participating high schools. Three additional high schools within the college district and two high schools outside the district (Colton, Mac-Hi) participated in this study. Table 1 shows the number and percent of students participating by high school. This response represents approximately 67% of all seniors enrolled in these high schools.

Location and size of the high schools are shown in Figure 1.

Desales and Walla Walla Valley Academy are privately supported high schools

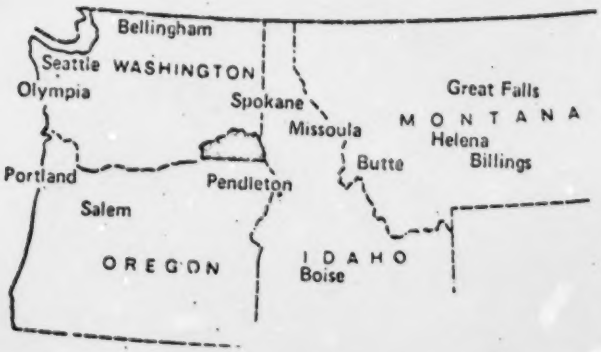
TABLE 1

SENIORS PARTICIPATING BY HIGH SCHOOL

HIGH SCHOOL	HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS	
	NUMBER	PERCENT
ASOTIN	21	3.1
BURBANK	43	6.4
CLARKSTON	103	15.2
DAYTON	69	10.2
DESLAES	24	3.5
POMEROY	26	3.8
PRESCOTT	16	2.4
TOUCHET	25	3.7
WAITSBURG	20	3.0
WA-HI	201	29.7
WALLA WALLA VALLEY ACADEMY	47	6.9
MAC-HI	62	9.2
COLTON	20	3.0
TOTAL	677	100.0

Walla Walla Community College

WASHINGTON STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT 20



Washington

Idaho

Colton

Pomeroy

Prescott

Waitsburg

Dayton

Clarkston

Asotin

Burbank

DeSales
Wa-Hi
Walla Walla
Valley Academy

Touchet

Mac-Hi

Oregon

Figure 1 - Location of High Schools Surveyed

FINDINGS

I. Educational Plans

Four related study questions are addressed in this section:

1. What are high school seniors' plans after graduation?
2. What college or school do the seniors that plan to continue their education desire to attend?
3. What are the most important reasons for choosing a particular college or school?
4. What factors may prevent students from furthering their education?

The format to be followed in presenting the findings begins with an explanation of the data from the 1982 study followed by comparative highlights using the 1980 study as a base.

Plans After Graduation. Eighty-three percent (83%) of high school seniors report that they plan to continue their education at some time after graduating from high school. Sixty-eight percent (68%) indicate that they plan to continue their education within six months of their high school graduation. Full-time education is planned by 55% of high school seniors while part-time education (combined with work either full or part-time) is planned by 13% of seniors. Of the 32% of seniors who do not plan to continue their education within six months of graduation, 15% plan to work full-time for a year or more and then continue their education, 7% have no education planned but are planning to work full-time, 4% plan to join The Armed Services, 2% plan to combine marriage and part-time work, and 4% have other plans. A final way of looking at seniors' plans is to look

across the various response categories at the percent who plan to combine education and work--either full or part-time. Forty-six percent (46%) of seniors plan to combine education and work compared to only 22% planning full-time education without work and 7% planning full-time work without education. Expressed as a proportion of students planning to continue their education within six months of graduation, we see that two out of three students (67%) are planning to conbine education and work. (Table 2 shows high school seniors' plans after graduation from high school for both 1980 and 1982.)

TABLE 2

HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS' PLANS AFTER GRADUATION FROM HIGH SCHOOL

PLANS	NUMBER		PERCENT	
	1982	1980	1982	1980
EDUCATION FULL TIME, WORK PART TIME	222	152	32.8	29.2
EDUCATION FULL TIME	147	150	21.7	28.8
WORK FULL TIME FOR 1 YEAR THEN CONTINUE EDUCATION	102	61	15.1	11.7
WORK FULL TIME, NO EDUCATION PLANNED	44	48	6.5	9.2
EDUCATION PART TIME, WORK PART TIME	50	31	7.4	6.0
ARMED SERVICES	29	24	4.3	4.6
WORK FULL TIME, EDUCATION PART TIME	40	23	5.9	4.4
MARRIAGE AND WORK PART TIME	12	13	1.8	2.5
OTHER	28	12	4.1	2.3
DON'T KNOW	3	6	.4	1.2
TOTAL	677	520	100.0	100.0

When the current study data is compared to findings from the 1980 study the major difference is the decrease in the percentage of students planning only full-time education (29% in 1980 to 22% in 1982) coupled with a small increase in the percentage of students combining full-time education

and part-time work (29% in 1980 to 33% in 1982). The importance or necessity of combining education and work has grown in the intervening period (46% of seniors in 1982 compared with 40% in 1980). In addition, when the students planning to continue their education after a year or more of full-time work are added in to the totals, the percentage of students planning education after graduation actually rose slightly in the last two years (from 80% in 1980 to 83% in 1982), thus indicating no diminution in the perceived importance of education.

College/School Plans. Those students planning to continue their education were asked what college or school they planned to attend. Two-thirds (67%) of those responding indicated they planned to attend a 2-year institution with the remaining one-third planning to attend a 4-year institution (see Table 3). There is a wide divergence in students' plans when the data is broken down by high school. Ninety-three percent (93%) of Mac-Hi seniors plan to attend a 2-year institution compared to 39% of Asotin seniors. The remaining schools fall in between these two extremes. Focusing in on those students planning to attend a 2-year institution, two-thirds (66%) plan to attend WWCC, with the remaining one-third planning to attend a number of other 2-year institutions in Washington, Oregon, and Idaho. Once again there is wide variation in percentages of students planning to attend WWCC when the data is broken down by the individual high schools participating in the study. All seniors planning to attend a 2-year institution plan to attend WWCC from three high schools--Walla Walla Valley Academy, Prescott, and Desales while only 5% of seniors attending Burbank are choosing WWCC as the 2-year institution to attend. (Although a number of factors may be responsible for this wide variation, proximity to WWCC may be a primary explanatory factor.)

TABLE 3

PLANS OF HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS FOR ENROLLING IN POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION
N = 436

HIGH SCHOOL	PLAN TO ATTEND			
	TWO-YEAR		FOUR-YEAR	
	NO.	PERCENT	NO.	PERCENT
ASOTIN	5	38.5	8	61.5
BURBANK	22	84.6	4	15.4
CLARKSTON	22	50.0	22	50.0
DAYTON	42	87.5	6	12.5
DESALES	13	68.4	6	31.6
POMEROY	18	78.3	5	21.7
PRESCOTT	7	50.0	7	50.0
TOUCHET	15	71.4	6	28.6
WAITSBURG	9	56.3	7	43.7
WA-HI	86	68.3	40	31.7
WALLA WALLA VALLEY ACADEMY	15	40.5	22	59.5
MAC-HI	28	93.3	2	6.7
COLTON	12	63.2	7	36.8
TOTAL	294	67.4	142	32.6

Looking comparatively at the 1980 study findings, there has been a substantial increase in the percentage of students planning to attend a 2-year institution. The percentage increased from 57% in 1980 to 67% in 1982. The increase in the percentage planning to attend a 2-year institution was coupled with a corresponding decrease in the percentage planning to attend a 4-year institution. The range of students planning to attend a 2-year institution in 1980, when broken down by the participating high schools, was as wide as the range for 1982 (from 27% to 82%) although lower at both extremes. Although the percentage of students planning to attend a 2-year

institution increased, the percentage of those students planning to attend WWCC remained relatively unchanged (66% in 1982 compared to 67% in 1980). Expressed differently, WWCC retained its two-thirds share of the 2-year institution-bound seniors, while the relative proportion of seniors planning to attend 2-year institutions increased. In 1980, 38% of seniors planning to further their education planned to attend WWCC (67% of 57%); in 1982, the proportion had risen to 44% of seniors (66% of 67%).

Reasons for Choosing a College/School. Students were presented with ten reasons for choosing a particular college or vocational school and for each were asked to indicate if it was a very important, somewhat important, or not at all important reason for the choice of a college (see Appendix A: Question 3). Looking first at only the percentage of students who reported that it was a very important reason (see Table 4), low tuition cost and

TABLE 4

PERCENT OF HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS INDICATING VERY IMPORTANT REASONS FOR CHOOSING PARTICULAR COLLEGE

REASON	PERCENT	
	1980	1982
LOW TUITION COST	36	44
AVAILABILITY OF FINANCIAL AID	36	43
COLLEGE'S REPUTATION	35	34
CAMPUS SOCIAL ACTIVITIES	21	20
LOW STUDENT-FACULTY RATIOS	21	18
CAN LIVE AT HOME	17	16
ATHLETIC PROGRAM	16	12
TEACHER'S OR COUNSELOR'S SUGGESTION	14	14
FRIENDS ATTEND	11	9
PARENTS' PREFERENCE	10	12

availability of financial aid were cited by 44% and 43% of seniors respectively. One-third (34%) of responding seniors said that the college's reputation is a very important reason. Corresponding figures for the other seven reasons ranged from 9% to 20%. Another way of looking at the results that is helpful in sorting out the relative influence of the remaining seven reasons is to look at the percent of seniors who indicated that the reason was not at all important. Expressed this way, the least important reasons for choosing a school or college are "can live at home while attending "(52%), "athletic program" (49%), and "friends attend" (49%). Teacher's or counselor's suggestions, which was indicated as being very important for only 14% of seniors, is viewed as being not at all important by only 26% of seniors -- meaning that three-fourths of seniors view those suggestions as being at least somewhat important reasons for choosing a college or school.

TABLE 5

PERCENT OF HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS INDICATING NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT REASONS FOR CHOOSING PARTICULAR COLLEGE

REASON	PERCENT
LOW TUITION COST	14
AVAILABILITY OF FINANCIAL AID	21
COLLEGE'S REPUTATION	19
CAMPUS SOCIAL ACTIVITIES	28
LOW STUDENT-FACULTY RATIOS	30
CAN LIVE AT HOME	52
ATHLETIC PROGRAM	49
TEACHER'S OR COUNSELOR'S SUGGESTION	26
FRIENDS ATTEND	49
PARENTS' PREFERENCE	41

Compared to 1980, the relative importance of low tuition cost and availability of financial aid have increased (44% and43% in 1982 compared to 36% and 36% in 1980) while athletic programs and low student-faculty ratios have decreased slightly as very important reasons for choosing a college (from 16% and 21% in 1980 respectively to 12% and 18% in 1982). The three reasons cited most frequently as being very important in 1982 and 1980 are the same and include low tuition cost, availability of financial aid, and the college's reputation.

Obstacles to Further Education. Students were asked to cite the factor(s) that they thought would most likely keep them from furthering their education. Over three-fifths (63%) of seniors responding cited lack of money as the most likely obstacle. Full-time employment, in the sense of the need to work full time (closely associated with lack of money), was the second most frequently cited obstacle (86%). Marriage was cited by 6% of responding seniors as the most likely obstacle (see Table 6). The same

TABLE 6

OBSTACLES IDENTIFIED BY HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS THAT MAY PREVENT CONTINUATION OF THEIR EDUCATION
N = 402 (1980)
N = 584 (1982)

OBSTACLES	NUMBER		PERCENT	
	1982	1980	1982	1980
MONEY	366	223	62.7	55.5
MARRIAGE	34	24	5.8	6.0
FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT	47	23	8.0	5.7
ARMED SERVICES	15	5	2.6	1.2
ILLNESS	1	5	.2	1.2
OTHER	121	122	20.7	30.3
TOTAL	584	402	100.0	100.0

basic pattern of responses was found in the 1980 study with money cited as the most likely obstacle by 56% of responding students.

II. Career Plans

Two related study questions are addressed in this section:

1. What are the high school seniors' vocational choices?
2. How sure are high school seniors of their career choices?

Vocational Choice. Students were asked for their choice of a vocation after graduation. Seventy-six different careers were indicated by the 629 seniors responding to the questions. Fifty-two percent (52%) of the responding seniors chose one of the fourteen careers displayed in Table 7. The remaining students chose other careers as indicated in Appendix B. One-quarter (25%) of the students chose one of the following top five careers: Nursing (6%), Accounting/Bookkeeping (6%), Business Administration (5%), Cosmetology (5%), or Business Management (4%). All but one of these career choices (Nursing) is in The Business and Commerce grouping of careers. The tremendous variety of student career choices makes it difficult to systematically review the findings on individual careers. Major career groupings as displayed in Table 8 provide a useful tool. Using career groupings we find that over one-third (36%) of seniors are planning careers in The Business and Commerce area. Trade and Industrial Technology (17%) and Traditional College Majors (16%) were the next two largest career choice areas. Health Service and Paramedics Technologies were the career choices of 11% of the seniors, while Natural Sciences Technology and Public Service careers were chosen by 8% and 4% of students respectively. As useful as

TABLE 7

HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS CAREER CHOICES
N = 629

CAREER CHOICES	NUMBER	PERCENT
NURSING	37	5.9
ACCOUNTING/BOOKKEEPING	36	5.7
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION	29	4.6
COSMETOLOGY	29	4.6
BUSINESS MANAGEMENT	27	4.3
AGRICULTURE	26	4.1
ENGINEERING	21	3.3
EDUCATION	21	3.3
DATA PROCESSING	20	3.2
AUTO MECHANICS	19	3.0
SOCIAL SCIENCE	19	3.0
WELDING	16	2.5
FASHION MERCHANDISING	14	2.2
FINE ARTS	13	2.0
ALL OTHER CAREER CHOICES	302	48.3
TOTAL	629	100.0

TABLE 8

HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR CAREER CHOICES FOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT NO. 20
N = 629

HIGH SCHOOL	BUSINESS & COMMERCE	HEALTH & PARAMED.	MECHANICAL/ ENGINEERING	NATURAL SCIENCE	PUBLIC SERVICE	TRADITIONAL COLLEGE MAJOR	OTHER
ASOTIN	22.2	5.6	38.9	16.7	11.1	5.6	0.0
BURBANK	30.6	5.6	30.6	5.6	0.0	13.9	13.9
CLARKSTON	42.6	17.0	12.8	7.4	5.3	13.8	1.1
DAYTON	28.6	11.1	17.5	7.9	3.2	17.5	14.3
DESALES	50.0	9.1	9.1	13.6	9.1	4.5	4.5
POMEROY	26.9	26.9	7.7	23.1	0.0	7.7	7.7
PRESCOTT	20.0	6.7	13.3	33.3	6.7	13.3	6.7
TOUCHET	33.3	0.0	29.2	12.5	0.0	16.7	8.3
WAITSBURG	25.0	10.0	25.0	10.0	10.0	15.0	5.0
WA-HI	45.7	9.6	10.6	2.7	2.1	21.3	8.0
WALLA WALLA VALLEY ACADEMY	35.6	17.8	11.1	0.0	6.7	22.2	6.7
MAC-HI	18.6	11.9	28.8	10.2	6.8	5.1	18.6
COLTON	26.3	5.3	36.8	15.8	0.0	15.8	0.0
TOTAL	35.8	11.4	17.2	7.9	4.0	15.6	8.1

this summary description may be in understanding the pattern of career choices for the entire district, it is crucial to note that there is substantial variation between high schools in student career choices. Each high school displays a unique pattern with no one high school really matching the district-wide average. Thus, for many interpretative uses, individual level data by high school should be consulted.

Sureness of Career Choice. The second career related study question concerns the extent to which students are sure of the career choice they have made. Thirty-nine percent (39%) of responding seniors indicated that they were very sure of their career choice, 46% indicated they were somewhat sure of their career choice, while 15% were not at all sure of their career choice. Once again there is substantial variation between students grouped by high schools (see Table 9). Seventy-three percent (73%) of the students at Pomeroy report being very sure of their career choice, while 19% of the students at Prescott report being very sure of their career choice. Similar patterns of variation can be found by inspecting the other response category percentages.

Compared to 1980, students in 1982 are slightly less sure of their choice of career (39% reporting very sure in 1982 versus 43% in 1980). In looking at the actual career choice, several shifts in preference can be noted. First, there has beer a substantial increase in the percentage of students choosing Business and Commerce related careers. In 1980, 29% of students chose a Business career while 36% chose a Business career in 1982. The other career field to show an increase during the period is Health, which rose from 8% in 1980 to 11% in 1982. The two career fields showing declines were Traditional College

TABLE 9

SURENESS OF HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS CAREER PLANS BY HIGH SCHOOL
N = 669

HIGH SCHOOL	VERY SURE	SOMEWHAT SURE	NOT AT ALL SURE
ASOTIN	38.1	61.9	0.0
BURBANK	45.2	40.5	14.3
CLARKSTON	33.7	50.5	15.8
DAYTON	49.3	32.8	17.9
DESALES	29.2	58.3	12.5
POMEROY	73.1	19.2	7.7
PRESCOTT	18.8	62.5	18.8
TOUCHET	33.3	45.8	20.8
WAITSBURG	25.0	55.0	20.0
WA-HI	38.2	47.7	14.1
WALLA WALLA VALLEY ACADEMY	44.7	46.8	8.5
MAC-HI	40.3	41.9	17.7
COLTON	25.0	60.0	15.0
ALL SCHOOLS TOTAL	39.3	46.2	14.5

Majors, falling from 21% in 1980 to 16% in 1982 and Public Services which fell from 8% in 1980 to 4% in 1982. (The decline in the percentage of students choosing Traditional College Majors may be related to the reduction in the percentage of students planning to attend a 4-year institution.)

III. Perceptions of Programs and Services at WWCC

Study questions in this section address students' familiarity with WWCC and sources of information about WWCC as well as an evaluation of the

academic quality of WWCC and the quality of WWCC compared to 4-year institutions. The specific study questions are as follows:

1. How familiar are high school seniors with programs and services provided by the college?
2. What are the students primary sources of information about the college?
3. Do high school seniors want additional information about the college?
4. What is the high school senior's impression about the academic quality of WWCC?
5. How does WWCC compare with 4-year colleges?

Familiarity with WWCC Programs and Services. Students were asked to indicate their familiarity with eight programs/services provided by WWCC. Highest levels of familiarity were reported for intercollegiate athletics and financial aid, with three out of ten students indicating they were very familiar with the programs. Two out of ten students said they were very familiar with the basic skills curriculum, intramural athletics, career counseling, and career-life planning. One out of ten seniors reported they were very familiar with student clubs and organizations and student employment opportunities (see Table 10). Three out of ten students reported no familiarity with intercollegiate athletics, financial aid, and the basic skills curriculum. Four out of ten seniors said they were not at all familiar with intramural athletics, career counseling, and career-life planning, while half the high school seniors were not at all familiar with student clubs and student

TABLE 10

HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS' FAMILIARITY WITH PROGRAMS AND SERVICES AVAILABLE AT WALLA WALLA COMMUNITY COLLEGE
N = 480 (1980)
N = 635 (1982)

PROGRAM/SERVICE	PERCENT FAMILIAR					
	VERY FAMILIAR		SOMEWHAT		NOT AT ALL	
	1982	1980	1982	1980	1982	1980
INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS	32.4	37.1	35.1	33.7	32.6	29.2
FINANCIAL AID	28.1	24.9	43.3	64.9	28.6	35.1
BASIC SKILLS CURRICULUM	24.2	23.5	42.9	35.8	32.9	34.8
INTEAMURAL ATHLETICS	22.7	22.3	39.5	36.2	37.8	41.5
CAREER COUNSELING	19.2	20.5	43.6	40.2	37.3	39.3
CAREER-LIFE PLANNING	19.2	19.8	41.8	37.9	39.1	42.3
STUDENT CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS	13.2	16.5	38.2	37.0	48.6	46.6
STUDENT EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES	11.4	11.9	35.8	34.8	52.7	53.3

employment opportunities. Looking at the results from the 1980 study, we see that there is great stability in both the relative familiarity rankings of the eight programs/services and in the distribution of responses across the various categories of familiarity for any one program/service.

Primary Information Sources. Seniors were also presented with nine different potential sources of information and, for each, asked if it had been a source of information about WWCC for them (see Table 11). Eighty-seven percent (87%) of the students reported that friends had been a source of information about WWCC. High school counselors and teachers had been a source of information for 71% and 64% of students respectively. Approximately half of the seniors reported receiving information from relatives, local newspapers, and people at work. Special mailings from WWCC had been a source for 37% of

TABLE 11

HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS' INFORMATION SOURCES ABOUT
WALLA WALLA COMMUNITY COLLEGE
N = 474 (1980)
N = 630 (1982)

INFORMATION SOURCE	NUMBER		PERCENT	
	1982	1980	1982	1980
FRIENDS	559	402	86.9	84.8
HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELORS	453	268	71.2	57.8
HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS	405	260	63.9	56.0
RELATIVES	328	246	52.0	52.3
LOCAL NEWSPAPERS	292	242	46.3	52.0
PEOPLE AT WORK	297	184	47.1	39.7
WWCC SPECIAL MAILINGS	233	178	37.0	38.6
RADIO	177	151	28.0	32.5
WWCC FACULTY-STAFF	177	124	28.1	26.7

seniors while 28% had received information from radio and WWCC faculty-staff. In general, personal sources of information (friends, high school counselors and teachers, and so forth) were more likely to have been information sources than impersonal ones (radio, special mailings, and so forth).

The relative reliance on information sources is fairly stable in 1982 as compared to 1980. In absolute terms, however, there were two substantial changes. First, the percentage of students reporting high school counselors as a source of information about WWCC increased by 13% from 58% in 1980 to 71% in 1982. Second, the percentage of students reporting friends at work a source increased from 40% in 1980 to 47% in 1982. The two information sources showing small declines were radio (declining by 5% to 28% in 1982) and local newspapers (declining by 6% to 46% in 1982).

Desire for Additional Information. Forty percent (40%) of responding seniors indicated they would like more information about WWCC. This is an increase from 1980, when approximately one-third of the seniors indicated they wanted additional information. When students are grouped by their educational plans into subgroups--attending voc-tech schools/colleges, attending 4-year universities/colleges, and undecided on where to attend/not planning to further their education--substantial differences result. Nineteen percent (19%) of those planning to attend a 4-year college desire additional information, 27% of the undecided group wants additional information, and 61% of those planning to attend a voc-tech school/college want additional information. Further subdividing the group of students planning to attend a voc-tech school/college: 77% of those planning to attend WWCC want additional information and 30% of those planning to attend other schools/colleges want additional information. Thus, although a large percentage (55%) of those desiring additional information are already planning to attend WWCC, there remains a substantial group with other plans who want more information about WWCC.

Academic Quality of WWCC. Seniors "graded" the academic quality of WWCC as either excellent, good, fair, or poor. Seventy-five percent (75%) reported an overall impression of "good" or better for WWCC (12% "excellent" and 62% "good"), while 22% gave WWCC a "fair" rating and 4% rated WWCC "inferior (see Table 12). As Table 12 also displays, there is moderate variation between high schools in how WWCC is viewed. Fifty-eight percent (58%) of seniors at Burbank rate WWCC as good or better compared to 89% of Waitsburg seniors. As might be expected, students planning to attend WWCC

TABLE 12

SENIORS' IMPRESSION OF ACADEMIC QUALITY OF WWCC BY HIGH SCHOOL
N = 653

HIGH SCHOOL	QUALITY			
	EXCELLENT	GOOD	FAIR	INFERIOR
ASOTIN	15.0	65.0	15.0	5.0
BURBANK	0.0	58.3	33.3	8.3
CLARKSTON	1.0	60.8	34.0	4.1
DAYTON	16.2	67.6	13.2	2.9
DESALES	8.3	66.7	25.0	0.0
POMEROY	15.4	53.8	30.8	0.0
PRESCOTT	12.5	68.8	18.8	0.0
TOUCHET	8.3	79.2	8.3	4.2
WAITSBURG	22.2	66.7	11.1	0.0
WA-HI	12.6	60.6	21.7	5.1
WALLA WALLA VALLEY ACADEMY	19.1	63.8	14.9	2.1
MAC-HI	26.7	58.3	10.0	5.0
COLTON	10.5	52.6	36.8	0.0
TOTAL ALL HIGH SCHOOLS	12.4	62.2	21.6	3.8

have a more favorable impression of WWCC than those planning to attend other voc-tech schools, universities, or are unsure about their plans/have no current plans to further their education. Ninety-two percent (92%) of seniors planning to attend WWCC rate it as "good" or "excellent," 67% of those planning to attend other voc-tech schools, 68% of those who are unsure/have no plans for further education rate WWCC "good" or "excellent."

In the 1980 study, two-thirds of all seniors rated WWCC as "good" or "excellent." Thus, the current study's figure of 75% "good" or "excellent" represents a modest increase in the perceived academic quality of WWCC.

Comparative Quality: WWCC vs. Four-Year Colleges. High school seniors were asked to compare the quality of WWCC to 4-year colleges and universities in six areas: student-faculty ratios, occupational/technical programs, the first two years of college, students, faculty/staff, and courses/classes. At least two-thirds of the students rated WWCC as the equal or better than 4-year colleges on all six factors. At best, 9 out of 10 students (89%) rated WWCC as the equal or better in terms of student-faculty ratio. Eight out of ten students rated WWCC as the equal or better in the areas of occupational preparation, first two years of college, students, faculty and staff. Compared to 1980, comparative ratings of WWCC in 1982 remained virtually unchanged.

TABLE 13

HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS' COMPARISON OF VARIOUS FACTORS
BETWEEN WALLA WALLA COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND
FOUR-YEAR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
N = 444 (1980)
N = 580 (1982)

FACTORS	WWCC VS. FOUR-YEAR COLLEGES					
	% BETTER THAN 4-YR. COLLEGES		% SAME AS 4-YR. COLLEGES		% WORSE THAN 4-YR. COLLEGES	
	1982	1980	1982	1980	1982	1980
STUDENT-FACULTY RATIO	44.7	47.5	44.4	43.8	10.9	8.7
OCCUPATIONAL PREPARATION	29.7	32.5	53.1	53.1	17.2	14.4
FIRST TWO YEARS OF COLLEGE	30.7	28.3	56.7	59.0	12.6	12.7
ABILITY OF STUDENTS	11.3	15.5	68.4	64.0	20.3	20.5
FACULTY AND STAFF	13.2	13.5	67.1	66.1	19.7	20.4
CLASSES	14.3	14.8	52.0	45.4	33.6	39.7

CONCLUSIONS

I. Educational Plans

Education is in the future plans of the vast majority of high school seniors (83%) and in the immediate (next six months) plans of a smaller but still substantial majority of students (68%).

Almost half of the seniors (46%) plan to combine education and work--up from 40% in 1980. Of seniors planning to be enrolled in a school the next year, fully two-thirds are combining school and work.

Of students planning to continue their education, two-thirds are planning to attend a 2-year institution, an increase from the 57% who reported plans to attend a 2-year institution in 1980. Two-thirds of students with plans to attend 2-year institutions are headed for WWCC. Thus, 44% of students planning to continue their education are going to WWCC.

Three reasons predominate for the choice of a school or college and are rated as a very important reason for the choice by substantial numbers of seniors: low tuition (44%), availability of financial aid (43%), and the college's reputation (34%). The influence of economic factors on choice has increased substantially over results obtained in the 1980 study.

Money remains the obstacle most often cited by students (63%) as keeping them from furthering their education.

II. Career Choice

Students indicated a choice of seventy-six different careers. Fourteen careers accounted for half the students and five careers accounted for one-quarter of the students. Business and Commerce careers were chosen by 36% of

the students while Trade and Industrial Technologies and Traditional College Majors were each chosen by 17% of the students. More students are choosing careers in the Business and Health areas than did in 1980. Fewer students are planning careers in Traditional College Majors and Public Service.

Four out of ten students are very sure of their career choice while 15% report being not at all sure. These levels reflect slightly more uncertainty than was found in 1980.

III. Perceptions of WWCC

Seven of every ten seniors are at least somewhat familiar with WWCC intercollegiate athletics, financial aid, and basic skills curriculum. Six of ten are at least somewhat familiar with intramurals and career counseling and life planning. Half of the seniors are somewhat familiar with student clubs and employment opportunities.

Personal sources of information are important for providing seniors with information about WWCC. Nine out of ten seniors received information from friends, seven of ten from high school counselors, six of ten from high school teachers, and five out of ten from relatives, people at work, and local newspapers. Compared to 1980, there was a substantial increase in students reporting counselors as an information source.

Four of ten seniors want more information about WWCC. Those wanting additional information are divided almost equally between those planning to attend WWCC and those with other plans.

Three-fourths of seniors rate the academic quality of WWCC as good or excellent. This is a substantial increase from the two-thirds who rated it

good or excellent in 1980. Nine out of ten seniors who plan to attend WWCC rate it good or excellent; two out of three students with other plans rate it good or excellent.

The academic quality of WWCC was compared to that of 4-year institutions in six different areas. In each area a minimum of two out of three students rate WWCC as equal or better. Nine of ten seniors rated WWCC's student-faculty ratio as equal or better than those of 4-year institutions.

IMPLICATIONS

I. Educational Plans

The basic implication that can be drawn from the results concerning students' educational plans is the overriding importance of money and employment as conditioning and limiting factors governing postsecondary education. Two out of three students planning to continue their education within six months of graduation are planning to combine that education with full or part-time work. Students indicating WWCC as their choice for a college are planning to combine work and education in greater numbers--five out of six of these students plan to work and attend college.

The implication is thus that WWCC must combine and even increase its efforts to accomodate its clients--the working student. This includes such measures as wide ranges of choices in scheduling classes to meet work schedules and providing accesses to student services and administrative offices. There also appears to be a continuing need to assist students with their employment needs while they are in school at WWCC--either through assisting them to find jobs in the community or through direct opportunities for employment on campus. This should be useful not only for retaining students (lack of money was seen as the major barrier to continuance of studies), but may also prove to be a valuable asset in recruiting. The school's record of assisting students with their employment needs while enrolled may be a valuable selling point for many potential students.

II. Career Plans

Looking at district-wide breakdowns of student career choices has importance as one factor to be considered in helping to make curriculum choices

for WWCC for the short-term future. The data may confirm or contradict data from other sources, but can serve as an indicator of the direction and shape of overall potential student demand. How WWCC responds to that demand, of course, should not so much depend on the data as on an assessment of WWCC strengths and weaknesses vis-a-vis the potential student demand. In addition, it is very likely that student career choice is volatile over time and more subject to change than is the curriculum. Still, the fact that close to four out of ten district seniors surveyed are planning careers in Business and Commerce should not be lost on curriculum planning and those guiding the institution.

The fact that nearly half the seniors are only somewhat sure of their career plans is also important. It implies that there is a need on the part of WWCC to consciously deal with that uncertainty. Beginning courses in a curriculum segment and other early experiences at WWCC may be of particular importance in confirming an uncertain career choice. There may also be a need to plan to aid students in career decision-making through offering sufficiently broad options to allow further career exploration, at least within broad clusters of careers and through other career counseling and planning services.

A final implication of the career plans findings emanates not so much from the specific percentages of students choosing specific careers as it does from the wide diversity between the career profiles of the various high schools. When WWCC staff works with individual high schools--with administrators, counselors, and teachers--it is imperative to keep in mind that the school is not typified by the district average, but rather has its own unique pattern of student career preferences. This pattern of career preferences may also vary considerably over time and follow or contradict the general pattern

of changes for the district. (This is especially likely to occur in high schools with small graduating classes where a shift of a few individuals may be reflected in major changes in the percentages.)

III. Perceptions of WWCC

Most of the information concerning WWCC comes through imtermediaries and not directly from WWCC and is therefore subject to only moderate control by the college. Friends, relatives, and people at work are prime examples of this. Fortunately, high school counselors and teachers are often-cited sources too and are likely to continue to be willing to serve as transmitters of information. In addition, since they are an easily identifiable group of manageable size, they offer an excellent conduit for transmitting the college's message with only minimal distortion.

Friends and co-workers remain an important source of information about WWCC, even though they are less "manageable." A person at work who has received training at WWCC transmits a powerful message by presence alone. Interestingly, the percentage of seniors getting information about WWCC from people at work increased substantially from 1980 to 1982. Although it cannot be demonstrated with the study data, a plausible interpretation is that greater numbers of high school students are working (in part to finance their future education) and are thus coming into contact with WWCC graduates in the work place.

Another finding with important implications concerns the number of students wanting additional information about WWCC. As presented earlier, about half of these seniors are planning to attend WWCC, and the information probably would help them to firm up their plans and reduce uncertainty over what to

expect at the college. As important however, is the fact that there are still a large number of students (with other school plans) who are interested in knowing more about WWCC. This, to an extent, may reflect the degree to which they are unsure of their plans and are willing to consider additional information as a basis for decision-making. This is an important group to seek out and target for information.

Given the moderate levels of familiarity with WWCC reported by the seniors, it is perhaps surprising that there is such an overwhelmingly positive assessment given of WWCC. It appears that most seniors have formed an overall positive image of WWCC although this assessment is not based on any high level of familiarity with college programs or services. (We tend to attribute to others more knowledge of and interest in our programs/services than we should. This tendency is based, I believe, on our own intense and daily involvement in our work.) It is more in the nature of "good will" and as would be the case for a business should be viewed as a valuable asset. That such "good will" exists among the seniors is supported by the fact that although only about half have had personal contact with a representative of WWCC, 80% are willing to say that WWCC faculty and staff are as good or better than faculty and staff at 4-year schools.

A final point to be made concerns the differences in evaluations of WWCC among seniors from different high schools. Questions include why the differences exist, is it important for WWCC to be attentive to the differences, and what can/should be done to counteract negative evaluations? That individuals have negative views of WWCC is understandable, given the wide variation in individuals, their backgrounds, interests, and experiences. That an entire high school class has a more negative evaluation of WWCC than the average,

especially when the pattern is repeated over time, is perhaps more puzzling.* As we begin to explore the possible reasons, determinations can be made as to whether special efforts should be made and how the college's message might be modified to reach the audience.

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*As an example, Clarkston seniors give a lower than average rating of WWCC in both years of the study. This low rating is associated with a much lower than average percentage of students planning to continue their education. What should WWCC's marketing strategy/approach be for Clarkston and how does/should this strategy differ from that used for Walla Walla Valley Academy where two times as many seniors plan to continue their education and where the evaluation of WWCC is very positive?

APPENDIX

WORK BREAKDOWN STRUCTURE

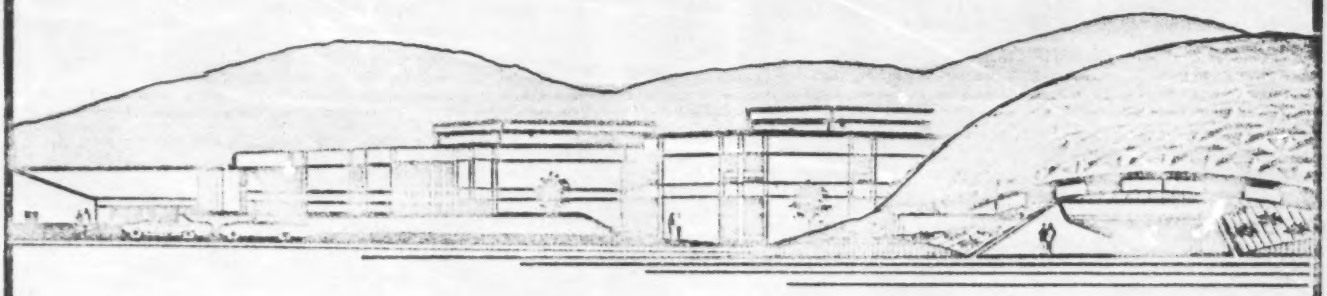
Objective: Determine High School Seniors' Career Interests, Educational Plans, and Perceptions of Programs and Services Available at Walla Walla Community College

Activity	Tasks	Target Dates
1.0 Plan the project	1.1 Prepare a statement of purpose	10/30
	1.2 Identify questions to be addressed	10/30
	1.3 Identify audiences to be served	10/30
	1.4 Determine potential uses of results	10/30
	1.5 Determine products to be developed	10/30
	1.6 Determine staffing requirements	10/30
	1.7 Prepare project budget	10/30
	1.8 Determine timelines for activities and procedures	10/30
	1.9 Identify standards for evaluating the research process	11/6
	1.10 Select appropriate form of data gathering instrument	11/6
	1.11 Determine appropriate data gathering procedures	11/6
	1.12 Determine sampling plan	11/6
	1.13 Determine data storage and retrieval procedures	11/6
	1.14 Determine data analysis and interpretation procedures	11/6
	1.15 Determine procedures for reporting the results	11/10
	1.16 Determine procedures for disseminating the results	11/10
	1.17 Review study design with WWCC representatives on project team	11/10
2.0 Submit grant application for funding	2.1 Complete grant application	11/12
	2.2 Submit grant application to the Research Coordinating Unit	11/12
	2.3 Receive notification of approval	1/4
	2.4 Implement project	1/4
3.0 Collect the data	3.1 Design data gathering instrument	1/10
	3.2 Pilot test the instrument	1/15
	3.3 Develop schedule for school visitations	1/10
	3.4 Complete school visitations and data gathering	2/30
	3.5 Review all completed surveys prior to processing	2/30

WORK BREAKDOWN STRUCTURE

Objective: Determine High School Seniors' Career Interests, Educational Plans, and Perceptions of Programs and Services Available at Walla Walla Community College

Activity	Tasks	Target Dates
4.0 Process data	4.1 Key punch data from instruments	3/15
	4.2 Write program for processing data via Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) with aid of a technical specialist at Ohio State	3/15
	4.3 Process data at Ohio State Computer Center	3/30
5.0 Analyze and interpret results	5.1 Prepare summary tables for each study question	4/30
	5.2 Prepare statements of findings for each study question	4/30
	5.3 Prepare conclusion statements for review with project team	5/15
	5.4 Prepare recommendations related to vocational planning and evaluation decisions	5/15
6.0 Report Results	6.1 Prepare comprehensive technical report	6/30
	6.2 Prepare executive summary	6/30
	6.3 Prepare popularized reports	6/30
	6.4 Prepare news release	9/23
	6.5 Oral presentation to General Vocational Advisory Council	9/16
	6.6 Oral presentation to Board of Trustees	9/23
	6.7 Review technical report with WWCC planning and budgeting committee.	10/30
	6.8 Submit report to ERIC	9/30
	6.9 Submit article to AVA and/or AACJC journals	9/30



Walla Walla Community College

High School Questionnaire

(1-2) High School _____

(3) Senior

(4) Junior

DIRECTIONS: Please answer each question as accurately and thoughtfully as you can, even if your plans are not definite. The questions can be answered by circling the number corresponding to the appropriate response and filling in the blanks. First, we would like to ask you about your plans following graduation from high school.

1 Within six months after you graduate from high school, you plan to:

(6-7)
01 Work at a full-time job, no further education planned at this time.
02 Work at a full-time job for a year or more then further my education.
03 Continue my education full-time.
04 Continue my education full-time and work part-time.
05 Work at a full-time job and continue my education part-time.
06 Continue my education part-time and work part-time.
07 Armed Services.
08 Marriage, work part-time.
98 Other _____

2 What college or school do you plan to attend:

(8) **College or university in Washington, Oregon or Idaho** _____ (name of school)

(9) **Vocational/Technical School--Washington** _____ (name of school)

(10) **Vocational/Technical School--Oregon, Idaho** _____ (name of school)

(11) **Trade apprenticeship program** _____ (name of program)

3 Please circle the response that best indicates how important the following reasons are for you in choosing a particular college or vocational school.

		Very Important	*Somewhat Important*	*Not at all Important*
(12)	**Can live at home while attending**	1	2	3
(13)	**Counselor or teacher suggestions**	1	2	3
(14)	**Reputation or prestige of school**	1	2	3
(15)	**Preference of parent or relative**	1	2	3
(16)	**Friends or classmates plan to attend**	1	2	3
(17)	**Low tuition cost**	1	2	3
(18)	**Campus social activities**	1	2	3
(19)	**Availability of Financial Aid**	1	2	3
(20)	**Athletic programs**	1	2	3
(21)	**Low student-faculty ratio**	1	2	3

4 My choice for a career or occupation **after I graduate** (**see** insert):

(22-24) _____

5 At this tim , how sure are you of the occupational choice given above in question number 4?

(25) 1 **Very sure**
2 Somewhat sure
3 Not at all sure

6 What factor(s) would keep you from furthering your education?

(26-27) _____

_____

Now we would like to find out what you think about Walla Walla Community College and where you get your information about Walla Walla Community College. Please circle the number corresponding to the appropriate response.

7 What is your overall impression of the academic quality of Walla Walla Community College?

(28) 1 Excellent
2 Good
3 Fair
4 Inferior

8 Compare the quality of the following at Walla Walla Community College versus that for a four-year college.

		Better than	*Same as*	*Worse than*
(29)	Students	1	2	3
(30)	Faculty & Staff	1	2	3
(31)	Courses/Classes	1	2	3
(32)	**Technical**, occupational programs	1	2	3
(33)	**First** two years of college	1	2	3
(34)	Low student-faculty ratio	1	2	3

9 Is each of the following a source of information for you about Walla Walla Community College?

		Yes	*No*
(35)	Radio	1	2
(36)	Friends	1	2
(37)	Relatives	1	2
(38)	People you work with	1	2
(39)	High school counselors	1	2
(40)	High school teachers	1	2
(41)	Local newspapers	1	2
(42)	WWCC special mailings	1	2
(43)	WWCC faculty and staff	1	2
(44)	Other _____ (please specify)	1	2

10 Have you talked with or heard a representative from Walla Walla Community College?

(45) 1 Yes, at high school.
2 Yes, at career/college night.
3 Yes, at WWCC.
4 Yes, on other occasion _____ (please specify)
5 No

11 Before reading this questionnaire, how familiar were you that Walla Walla Community College offers the following services and/or programs?

		Very Familiar	*Somewhat Familiar*	*Not at all Familiar*
(46)	Student employment on campus	1	2	3
(47)	Intercollegiate athletics	1	2	3
(48)	Intramural athletics	1	2	3
(49)	Financial aid for students	1	2	3
(50)	Student clubs and organizations	1	2	3
(51)	Career counseling for students	1	2	3
(52)	Basic skill building courses	1	2	3
(53)	Career/life planning courses	1	2	3

12 Would you like additional information about Walla Walla Community College?

(54) 1 Yes, please specify:

Academic transfer information

Vocational Program _____
(specify)

Financial aid information

Information on the cost of attending college

College catalog

2 No

13 Would you attend a session held at your school concerning information about Walla Walla Community College?

(55) 1 Yes

2 No

Now we would like to ask a few questions about you.

14 What degree or level of education do you hope to complete?

(56) 1 High school

2 Some college

3 Associate degree (2 years)

4 Bachelors degree (4 years)

5 Graduate or professional degree (e.g., M.D., Ph.D., Law, Masters)

6 Undecided

15 What is your sex?

(57) 1 Female

2 Male

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION AND EFFORT ON BEHALF OF WALLA WALLA COMMUNITY COLLEGE.

Careers

Select the career you plan to pursue and write *number* and name in blank in Question 4.

Business & Commerce

1. Accounting/Bookkeeping
2. Banking & Finance
3. Business Administration
4. Business Education
5. Business Machine Maintenance
6. Business Management
7. Clerk Typist
8. Commercial Art
9. Communication Media
10. Cosmetology
11. Court Reporting
12. Data Processing/Keypunch Operator
13. Fashion Merchandising
14. Food Service
15. Graphic Arts & Printing
16. Hotel-Motel & Restaurant Management
17. Labor & Industrial Relations
18. Legal Secretary
19. Marketing Management
20. Medical Secretary
21. Photography
22. Real Estate
23. Retailing
24. Secretarial Science
25. Textile and Apparel Arts
26. Theatre Arts

Health Services & Paramedical Technologies

27. Biomedical Electronics
28. Dental Assistant, Hygiene, Laboratory Technology
29. Emergency Medical Services
30. Health Assistant
31. Inhalation Therapy
32. Medical Laboratory Technology, Medical Record Technology, Medical Secretary
33. Mental Health Aide
34. Nuclear Medical Technician
35. Nursing Home Administration, Practical, R.N.
36. Occupational Therapy
37. Operating Room Technician
38. Physical Terapist
39. Radiological Technology
40. Speech Pathology
41. Dietitian & Nutritionist

Trade & Industrial Technologies

42. Air Conditioning & Heating
43. Aircraft Maintenance
44. Air Traffic Control
45. Architectural Building
46. Auto Body Repair
47. Auto Mechanics
48. Carpentry
49. Chemical Technology
50. Civil Engineering Technology
51. Diesel Mechanics
52. Drafting & Design Technology
53. Electricity, Industrial (Construction)
54. Electro-Mechanical Engineering Technology
55. Electronics
56. Farrier (Horseshoeing)
57. Industrial Engineering Technology
58. Machine Shop Technology/IMT
59. Nuclear Technology
60. Plastics Technology
61. Quality Control
62. Welding/Sheet Metal Work

Natural Science Technologies

63. Agriculture
64. Ag Mechanics
65. Biological
66. Environmental Health Technology
67. Forest Technology
68. Horticulture & Landscaping
69. Irrigation Technology
70. Pollution Control (Waste-Water)
71. Production Agriculture
72. Sanitation Technician

Public Service & Related Technologies

73. Child Care/Pre-Elementary Education
74. Criminal Justice
75. Fire-Fighting/Safety Technology
76. Interior Design
77. Library Technology
78. Para-Legal (Legal Assistant)
79. Penal & Correctional
80. Police Science (Law Enforcement)
81. Recreation Program Leadership
82. Security & Loss Prevention
83. Social Work Assistant
84. Teacher's Aide
85. Therapeutic Recreation
86. Urban and Regional Planning
87. Vocational Teacher Training

Traditional College Majors

88. Engineering: All types—Electrical, Mechanical, etc.
89. Social Sciences: History, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, Pre-Law, etc.
90. Natural Sciences: Biology, Ecology, Pre-Med., Pre-Dental, etc.
91. Physical Sciences: Physics, Chemistry, Astronomy, etc.
92. Mathematics
93. Communications: English, Journalism, Languages, etc.
94. Fine Arts: Art, Music, Theatre, etc.
95. Business Administration
96. Education: Teaching
97. Other, please specify _____

APR 15 1983

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